



HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

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HPU POLL: NORTH CAROLINIANS FAVOR MORE GUNS FOR LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS RATHER THAN BANNING GUNS TO STOP CRIME

HIGH POINT, N.C., Feb. 28, 2013 – The latest HPU Poll finds that a majority – 60 percent – of North Carolinians say that more law-abiding people having guns would lead to less violent crime than banning guns. However, large majorities also supported a range of other proposals to reduce gun violence, including banning high capacity ammunition clips and assault style weapons. They also support expanding criminal background checks for gun buyers, improved enforcement of existing laws and providing services for mentally ill people who show violent tendencies.

The HPU Poll asked North Carolinians about a list of possible approaches to reducing gun violence. Ninety-one percent supported requiring criminal background checks on all gun buyers, including those buying at gun shows and through private sales. Ninety percent supported providing services for mentally ill people who show violent tendencies. And 85 percent supported improving enforcement of existing gun laws.

Majorities also supported banning high capacity ammunition clips, assault style weapons and the sale of ammunition online. Exactly 50 percent favored reducing access to violent movies and video games, while 43 percent did not.

When asked which of these proposals would be the most important thing that could be done to prevent mass shootings from occurring, the top two proposals were requiring criminal background checks for all sales and providing services for mentally ill people who show violent tendencies. Both were favored by 26 percent of respondents.

“The lessons in this data are clear: North Carolinians believe guns in the hands of law-abiding citizens can deter crime, but they are also willing to consider a number of different proposals to stop gun violence,” says HPU Poll director Dr. Martin Kifer.

More guns for law-abiding citizens or ban guns

Now I am going to ask you some questions about guns. Which of these would lead to less violent crime in the United States: if guns were banned or more law-abiding people had guns?

Guns were banned – 26 percent
More people had guns – 60 percent
Don't know/refuse – 14 percent

(All adults sample surveyed Feb. 17–21, 2013, n = 484 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 4.5 percent)

Favor or oppose gun violence proposals

I am going to read a series of proposals to reduce gun violence. Do you favor or oppose each of the following proposals to reduce gun violence? (ORDER OF PROPOSALS WAS RANDOMIZED)

Requiring criminal background checks on all gun buyers, including those buying at gun shows and private sales:

Favor – 91 percent, Oppose – 8 percent, Don't know/refuse – 1 percent

Providing services for mentally ill people who show violent tendencies:

Favor – 90 percent, Oppose – 8 percent, Don't know/refuse – 3 percent

Improving enforcement of existing gun laws:

Favor – 85 percent, Oppose – 12 percent, Don't know/refuse – 4 percent

Banning high-capacity ammunition clips that can shoot dozens of bullets without stopping to reload:

Favor – 61 percent, Oppose – 34 percent, Don't know/refuse – 4 percent

Banning the sale of ammunition online:

Favor – 60 percent, Oppose – 37 percent, Don't know/refuse – 4 percent

Banning assault style weapons:

Favor – 57 percent, Oppose – 39 percent, Don't know/refuse – 5 percent

Reducing access to violent movies and video games:

Favor – 50 percent, Oppose – 43 percent, Don't know/refuse – 7 percent

(All adults sample surveyed Feb. 17–21, 2013, n = 484 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 4.5 percent)

Ranking favorability of gun violence proposals

Of those policies I previously mentioned, which do you think is the most important thing that could be done to prevent mass shootings from occurring in the United States?

- Requiring criminal background checks on all gun buyers – 26 percent
- Providing services for mentally ill people who show violent tendencies – 26 percent
- Banning assault style weapons – 13 percent
- None of these/Other – 11 percent
- Improving enforcement of existing gun laws – 8 percent
- Banning high-capacity ammunition clips – 7 percent
- Reducing access to violent movies and video games – 4 percent
- Banning the sale of ammunition online – 2 percent
- Don't know/Refuse – 4 percent

(All adults sample surveyed Feb. 17–21, 2013, n = 484 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 4.5 percent)

The most recent survey was fielded by live interviewers at the High Point University Survey Research Center calling on Feb. 17–21, 2013. The responses from a sample of all North Carolina counties came from 484 adults with landline or cellular telephones. The Survey Research Center contracted with Survey Sampling International to acquire this sample. The survey has an estimated margin of sampling error of approximately 4.5 percentage points. The data are weighted when appropriate toward population estimates for cellular and landline telephone use, age, gender and race. In addition to sampling error, factors such as question wording and other methodological choices in conducting survey research can introduce additional error into the findings of opinion polls.

Further results and methodological details from the most recent survey and past studies can be found at the Survey Research Center website at <http://src.highpoint.edu/> Dr. Martin Kifer, assistant professor of political science, serves as the director of the HPU Poll, and Dr. Sadie Leder, assistant professor of psychology, serves as the associate director of the HPU Poll.

At High Point University, every student receives an extraordinary education in an inspiring environment with caring people.SM HPU, located in the Piedmont Triad region of North Carolina, is a liberal arts institution with over 4,200 undergraduate and graduate students. It is ranked by U.S. News and World Report at No. 1 among Regional Colleges in the South and No. 1 among Up and Coming Regional Colleges in the South. Parade Magazine lists HPU in the top 25 private schools in the nation. HPU was selected in the 2012-2013 list of "Colleges of Distinction." The university offers 44 undergraduate majors, 43 undergraduate minors and 11 graduate degree programs. It is a member of the NCAA, Division I and the Big South Conference. Visit High Point University on the Web at highpoint.edu.

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